



Government of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago
Ministry of Trade and Industry

Remarks for the Minister of Trade and Industry

at the

Media Briefing
To Introduce Global Trinidad and Tobago

The Hyatt Regency Hotel
Jade & Ruby Rooms

8:30 am | Tuesday, 15th April 2025

Salutations

- Mr. Randall Karim, Permanent Secretary (Ag.) Ministry of Trade & Industry
- Ms Franka Castello, Chairman, Global Trinidad and Tobago
- Mr Sekou Alleyne, Chief Executive Officer, Global Trinidad and Tobago
- Distinguished Board of Directors of Global Trinidad and Tobago
- Specially Invited Guests
- Members of the Media

Good morning all.

Thank you for joining us for this significant milestone in the evolution of our country's trade and investment agenda.

I am pleased to have led the Amalgamation of the operations of three key entities under the Ministry of Trade and Industry, with the aim of creating a stronger, more agile organization—**Global Trinidad and Tobago**. This initiative is not just a structural change. It is a strategic decision; one driven by the need to optimise our resources, and align expertise and efforts under a single, focused Agency, to deliver more impactful results for our country.

This bold approach instils confidence in our collective ability to tackle challenges head-on by reinventing the way we work and how we future-proof the Trinidad & Tobago economy.

Advantages of the New Structure

The new structure of Global Trinidad and Tobago will remove duplication, strengthen coordination, and allow for a more integrated approach to how we work and how we promote Trinidad and Tobago as a destination for trade and investment.

The Agency will be better positioned to serve both local businesses seeking to expand into international markets as well as local and foreign investors looking for opportunity in Trinidad and Tobago. A single, cohesive Agency means clearer lines of accountability, faster decision-making, and more efficient service delivery.

We are faced with an increasingly competitive environment for foreign direct investment (FDI), and we must find transformative and innovative ways to attract these investments. Forging deeper ties with emerging markets and negotiating new or different trade terms are imperatives in the current global economic environment. So too, is the need to diversify and differentiate our offer.

Last week, I had the distinctive pleasure of launching the Special Economic Zones regime which will help us to navigate the prevailing market volatility. With an ambitious policy shift, SEZ provides unprecedented competitive incentives and facilitates physical infrastructure to meet the needs of both local and international investors. Businesses of all sizes will benefit from this initiative.

Last week also saw the launch of an expanded and enhanced TTBizLink platform. It is award-winning, and was the first of its kind Single Electronic Window for the region. Since its inception, it has exponentially increased the speed and efficiency with which applications and permits are processed. Today, a total of fifty-three (53) services delivered by twenty-five (25) government agencies are now expedited under the upgraded TTBizLink.

These are all ways that by which we stand out and up front.

Alignment with MTI's Overarching Strategy

The implementation of Global Trinidad and Tobago is in full alignment with our National Development Strategy, Vision 2030, and our commitment to building a resilient and dynamic economy through trade facilitation and investment promotion.

This merger of agencies supports the Ministry of Trade and Industry's overarching strategy for trade development—one that prioritizes diversification, innovation, and global competitiveness. It also underscores our drive for continuous business improvement, enhanced operational efficiencies and acceleration of the digital economy.

Objectives and Deliverables

In today's challenging global economic environment, attracting trade and investment requires clarity, consistency, and confidence. Investors want to see streamlined processes, reliable infrastructure, and government commitment. That is exactly what this initiative delivers—a modern, investor-focused organisation that is marketing the best of what Trinidad and Tobago has to offer.

Through **Global Trinidad and Tobago**, we aim to enhance market access, strengthen support of non-energy exports, and attract high-quality foreign direct investment (FDI) for both islands. We are also placing a strong emphasis on penetrating new and emerging markets and significantly increasing our visibility in the global trade arena.

Markets and Tariffs

The increased uncertainty created by some of our trading partners presents both a challenge and an opportunity. It is also a timely reminder of why we must continuously innovate and advocate for our producers and exporters in global markets and focus deeply on diversification and import substitution.

For us, it reinforces the importance of strengthening our export capacity, enhancing value-added production, and negotiating favourable trade agreements beyond our current trading borders. As mentioned earlier by the previous speakers, we are looking to grow our trade within North America, Latin America, UK/Europe, Asia and Africa.

Global Trinidad and Tobago is poised to become a game-changer in our trade outlook. By actively promoting investment, expanding export capacity, and working collaboratively with the private sector, this Agency will directly contribute to increasing our national GDP, creating foreign exchange, creating jobs, and strengthening our economic resilience. My expectation is that it will be a powerful catalyst for economic transformation.

The Leadership

I want to take a moment to recognize the capable leadership that will guide this new Agency. We are placing this responsibility in experienced and visionary hands—leaders who understand the needs of business, the dynamics of international trade, and the importance of national development.

I am pleased to welcome Sekou Alleyne as CEO and Stacy Adams as Deputy CEO of Global Trinidad and Tobago. Their visionary approach, strategic mindset, and passion for excellence align perfectly with the Agency's strategic objectives.

Sekou has been instrumental in shaping our investment landscape. His notable achievements include leading the emergence of the international business process outsourcing (BPO) cluster, which consists of 9 operational firms currently employing over 2,500 persons. He also led the tenanting of eTeck's Phoenix Park Industrial Estate with 98% tenant commitment. I am confident that Sekou's leadership will propel us to further distinguish and reinforce our position as an ideal location for investment and trade.

For the 114 persons who will be the engine for this organisation, it is essential that they understand that every team member has a pivotal role to play in shaping the business landscape of our nation. By bringing together the best of talent under one roof, we will benefit from greater collaboration and the pooling of ideas. I am excited at the prospects and tremendous possibilities.

I also wish to thank Ms Franka Costelloe and the Board of Directors for their continued support in operationalizing this initiative.

Minister's Leadership and Vision

My vision for the future is one where every family has at least one entrepreneur and every entrepreneur in Trinidad and Tobago feels supported, where our businesses are confidently competing in global markets, and where investment flows not just into our economy—but into our people, our communities, and our future.

We are building a country that is open for business, propelled by innovation, and powered by its people.

Closing and Thanks

In closing, I wish to thank you the members of the media for your continued support, and to all those who worked tirelessly to bring this merger of services and resources to fruition—the teams across the Ministry, the agencies involved, and our stakeholders in the private sector.

Together, we are shaping the future of trade and investment in Trinidad and Tobago.

Let us move forward with confidence, unity, and purpose.

Thank you.